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News Release

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Kaibab National Forest prescribed fire projects to begin south of Williams

Williams, Ariz., Oct. 5, 2016—For Immediate Release. Fire managers with the Williams Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest plan to conduct two prescribed fire projects south of Williams beginning Monday, Oct. 10, and continuing through next week.

The first of the two prescribed fire projects to be implemented will be the McCracken East Project, which is located east of County Road 73 near Barney Knoll 6 miles south of Williams. About 839 acres are scheduled to be treated using hand ignition with drip torches over two days. Smoke from the McCracken East Project is likely to be noticeable near Dogtown Lake, Sherwood Forest Estates, Pittman Valley, Parks, and Bellemont. While major smoke impacts are not anticipated in Williams, it is possible that smoke will be visible from the community and from Interstate 40.

If conditions remain favorable following completion of the McCracken East Project, fire managers will move slightly west to treat about 1,693 acres in the McCracken West Project, which is located just west of County Road 73 in the vicinity of Ham Tank and Kunde Knoll 7 miles south of Williams. Smoke impacts from the McCracken West Project are expected to be similar to those of McCracken East. Fire managers plan to use a helicopter to complete aerial ignitions on the burn unit over two days.

Kaibab National Forest fire managers have a number of other prescribed fires planned for fall and winter depending on fuel moistures and weather conditions. Following implementation of the McCracken projects, they will consider other locations on the Williams Ranger District to complete similar fuels reduction efforts. Public notification will be provided prior to the implementation of additional projects.

Fire plays a beneficial role in maintaining the ecological stability of many landscapes, including the Kaibab National Forest. Managers use prescribed fire as a practical means to reduce risks associated with uncharacteristic wildfires that can pose significant threats to public health and safety.

Forest managers recognize that prescribed fires may create negative impacts to air quality at times. However, these efforts, which are essential to restoring forests in a fire-adapted ecosystem, can also significantly reduce the amount and limit the duration of smoke impacts associated with uncontrolled wildfire situations in the future. In order to minimize smoke impacts to businesses and residences during prescribed fires, managers closely monitor wind direction and ventilation and adjust operations accordingly.

In the interest of safety, forest visitors are reminded to obey all traffic signs and use caution when traveling in the vicinity of prescribed fires as firefighters and fire-related traffic will be present.

All prescribed fires on the Kaibab National Forest are subject to approval by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality. For additional information on the Smoke Management Division and to view prescribed burn authorizations for any given day, visit <https://www.azdeq.gov/programs/air-quality-programs/smoke-management>.

Additional fire information for the Kaibab National Forest can be obtained through the following sources: InciWeb <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/4112/#>; Kaibab National Forest Fire Information Phone Line (928) 635-8311; Text Message – text ‘follow kaibabnf’ to 40404.

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